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The Five Truths of Christ

BY O. W. S. MCCALL

The testimony of Jesus. Revelation 1:9.

A TRUE church is a repository of certain great ideas. Lest, in this age of solid roads resting substantially on real mother earth, we should fall victim to the illusion that concrete, masonry, and machinery alone are practical, let us reflect that even these things are only expressions of ideas, and that on every hand it is the idea that is primary, bearing within itself that which can bid a world rise up in beauty out of chaos. No man is wise to forget this. The thoughts that people have had in other days are represented in our institutions and customs today, and the thoughts we are really believing today will be the outward and visible framework of the world tomorrow. Our "hard-headed" men are sometimes not practical, after all; they are only elementary.

Destiny lies in ideas. A mischievous way of thinking can blast either a man or a people—and probably there is nothing else that can! Right thoughts are the architects of the new heavens and the new earth. All thinking is creative, either of heaven or of hell. The important weight, therefore, of the opening sentence of this sermon no thoughtful man will dispute. For better or for worse, ideas change history.

In this instance the ideas came from Jesus. Although he did not originate them, he did at least, as Romanes reminded us, select them, and his selection from the thought of his day manifested the quality of his own mind and his sense of values. One's judgment in such matters is always a self-revelation, just as one indicates what he is made of when, amid the

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multitude of books, he decides what he shall read. In the case of Jesus we have not merely a man discriminating and emphasizing amid the moral and religious concepts of his day, exalting to a new and self-demonstrating glory what he selects for emphasis, but we have in addition the same man remarkably illustrating in himself those same ideas. A man has a right to claim as his own whatever he has preeminently caused to be his. Particularly in the moral and religious realm, the man who speaks great thoughts but cannot live them has no more business to regard them as his than a man may so claim great books which he buys but does not read. It is only as a book becomes a part of yourself that it is yours. It is true that Jesus' mind was not the only mind ever visited by the thoughts we associate peculiarly with him, but it does seem to be true that in a unique fashion he brought the holiest dreams of men to glow in human flesh, gave them the stamp of his own personality, wedded them to his name forever by adding to the great words "I think" the greater words "I do."

It is Dr. Rufus Jones who has enumerated the characteristic thoughts of Jesus as five, and it will be valuable to follow his enumeration here. This church, or any church, may well look upon them afresh and renew its sense of what it is set to do in the earth. Week after week, year after year, by every means and agency and power in its hands, it is striving to make manifest to men these heaven building ideas in all their shining potency. Decade after decade, no institution bears quite so centrally, so persistently upon these most exalted thoughts of our race; no other institution in the earth except the church of God is so committed, consciously and avowedly, to the establishment of them in the earth, in human institutions, customs, and experience. In representing them to you I am bidding you realize again our business. Our right to exist lies in this program. We may expect the people's faith in us, their acknowledgment of our value, and their cooperation, if we do not drift away from these truths.

I. God as Father

To our knowledge of the metaphysical modes of God's being Jesus has contributed little. Questions that are tantalizing to the world's thought he has left untouched, and it would seem that a surprising variety of opinions about God may be held without excluding Christ's opinion. In the profound realms of intellectual speculation the mind of man will probably work forever. There is no end to our inquiry about God; no period has been put, certainly not by Jesus, to our pursuit.

But the character of that Being whose mystery evermore torments the unfinished inquiry of man, his friendliness or indifference, his benevolence or malignance, all the urgent aspect of his relations with mankind—on this subject Jesus had very definite views. Doubtless they were founded upon his own experience. Out-towering every other gift he left with man was that which came from his unique God-consciousness—unique not in kind, for it must have been valueless to us had it been wholly unshared—but unique in its dazzling degree. The God-consciousness of Jesus is the supreme prize of religion. It is not necessary to explain it. Genius never yet was explained. If the Greek wishes to say that to him some God spoke, that is at least as near an account of genius as any other that we have. In essence it is perhaps not widely different from our Lord's own belief that the Father abode in him. His experience of God was definitely marked. The divine Face was not a smudge, it had character in it. He gave names to his experience, names which his brethren have recognized as being singularly apt, names which have hinted revealingly at truth which is actually beyond description though not beyond experience, and the greatest of these names is "Father."

Human Experience Reflected

In the parable of the prodigal son the young wastrel cannot become so mean and degraded as to be unloved, he cannot become so unbeautiful as to cause God to cease to be Father. That parable was born of human experience. It is the experience of Francis Thompson, who found that no flight or estrangement can shake off the pursuit of "The Hound of Heaven." But however much the freshness of a new name may help to renew our recognition of an ancient truth, no one will deny that "The Hound of Heaven," as a permanent description of the personal character of God, fails to approach in richness the great word "Father." "When you pray say, Father."

The transcendence of God, his outsoaring superiority to all things—"He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers!"—is also a religious experience, for in its finest moments the creature falls prostrate and consciously overcome before the Creator. "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" Religion that has lost this awing sense of God's mightiness, holiness, and sovereignty has become shallow. It is even facetious. It is prevalent enough, one fears, but, like a supremely cheerful but unimaginative countryman attending a royal court and behaving there with the easy camaraderie of the cowshed, it does not even know that it is in ill-taste. "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory." True religious experience has never suffered itself to lose this sense of the majesty of the Almighty.

But the immanence of God—"closer than breathing"—has also been a necessary realization of religion. And this presence of God in human life, this consciousness within us that there is no escape from his Spirit, that even in our willfulness and folly we are sought for as if a Shepherd had gone out from a fold to find us—this pursuing, wooing, healing, redeeming activity of God is surely, as Jesus felt it was, a testimony to the divine solicitude. It is God's love that makes him immanent, for love ever seeks to share experiences. Must even God, then, by the constraints

of his own nature, offer himself and also desire to have?

The New Testament, of course, is rich with this idea. The greatest love song of the ages has broken forth from those pages. One ventures the opinion that had it been only a benevolent sentiment, alien to the wider experiences of mankind, the Great Thought could never have survived. The most thrilling proof of the ultimate soundness of this interpretation of God's character lies in the ability of mankind to assent to it. Almost in defiance of the problem of evil, man has felt that not evil, but good, is the deeper truth.

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It is not accounted for by wish psychology. There is that in man, there is something in his experience of life and of himself and of Something not himself which seems to be interpreted by this high conception. The conception of God as Father, clarified so joyously by Jesus, has not been choked like a thing in an alien environment; it survives because in the life of man there is an atmosphere where it can survive.

Here, then, in grandeur and in beneficent value is this thought, risen in beauty from the vast soul of Christ. "Consider," cries Romanes, "what has all the science or all the philosophy of the world done for the thought of mankind to be compared with the one doctrine, 'God is love'?"

II. Men as Potential Sons of God

Unlike certain types of religious teaching popular in our time, Jesus did not ignore human tragedy. With a realism that was not less honest than that of the Greek he did not shrink from looking facts in the face, and he knew that men could destroy themselves. At the same time his solemn warnings fail to be depressing because they are not knells of doom; they are only solemn warnings. It is not necessary that men should be defeated, overwhelmed with misery, or driven into darkness. It is not even necessary that they should accept the status quo and, with flat mediocrity and little joy, get through the world as best they may, deficient in both self-respect and hope. On the contrary, man has "power to become"—surely one of the most buoyant phrases in literature! "The poorest, most defeated person in the world has in his hand the key to the Father's house and may rise up and go home when he will. This view of human life was one of the great springs of the immense optimism of Jesus." Not a son of the clay, nor a son of the jungle, unless one chooses to be. Deep in man, and with terrible power for mischief though instinct may be—instinct drawing its strength from the uncounted years—yet God is most fundamental of all, and his power for good is greater than all power for mischief, and the Thing in us that speaks of God is older than time itself. And man, if he so choose, may become a son of That. He may wed himself to it and make it his, and grow in excellence because of it, a new creature, a son of God, a joint heir with Christ. That is another of the Five Truths of Christ.

If one would open up and examine the experience described here as sonship with God it would be to see that it consists of three elements.

A Change of Mind

First, a changed "frame of mind": in the sense that Socrates meant it when he spoke of desiring to achieve in men not a conformity of all opinions with his own, not a dull uniformity of ideas, but a certain frame of mind in them. He wanted to effect in men a sympathy with truth, a spirit of inquiry, a teachableness: all being a very different frame of mind from antagonism, pride, indifference. In like manner the mind that is antipathetic to God and goodness can become changed into sympathy and the will to cooperate. The attempted—and always disappointed!—dragooning of the human mind into religious conformity is a man-made invention. But there can be no headway made in the life with God until the spirit of a man's mind is right. There is no invention about that, it is of the nature of things. The corrected frame of mind is one of the characteristics of the sons of God.

Second, the mind of God takes possession now more and more of the life that has become hospitable to it. The waves of the sea are ridden by many galleons, and the ports of the world receive the treasure. The calmness of the sea is deep, and its serenity is like blessedness forever. And the life of God flows about us more boundless than the ocean, and the sons of God know his power, and they draw from him new wealth and find in him new peace. When the mind and life of God are welcomed and encouraged in the mind and life of man, then to man comes strength—to meet life, to meet oneself, and not to be inadequate. He finds truer values—and learns to select the things that men

live by instead of spending his labor on that which is not bread. And he reposes in the divine blessedness, unharassed, undriven, untormented—O wistful words in a time like this!

Third, freedom—therefore a son of God has that. Freedom from plaguing fears (superstitions, half of them!), freedom from specters of the mind and despotisms of the blood; from passion, despair, and all miseries of night. Freedom does not mean that watchfulness should cease, that enemies have lost their power to hurt, that the dangerous strength of them may not ever and anon be felt as they stir to recover their tyranny. But the man who is not ruled by his enemies is free. And perhaps, like Michael with his heel upon the serpent's head, we may only be the more secure if occasionally we feel it writhe. With a couplet from Paul Gerhardt's Advent hymn, Albert Schweitzer expresses what Christianity means for the primitive man in the jungles of the primeval forest: "Christianity is for him the light that shines amid the darkness of his fears; it assures him that he is not in the power of nature-spirits, ancestral spirits, or fetishes, and that no human being has any sinister power over another, since the will of God really controls everything that goes on in the world.

"I lay in cruel bondage,
Thou cam'st and mad'st me free!"

And that freedom is also for those dwelling in parts of the world other than primeval forests!

III. The Reign of God as a New Social Order

This son of God becomes also a brother of man, and he shows it by a new spirit and a different way of life.

By many illustrations Jesus indicated how the Spirit of God in man would work in human society if once man began to let it. There is no question that the effects would be radically far-reaching. It does seem strange that in this day and age we still must plead for permission to be kind and just and honest. As an English writer has it: "It is very questionable whether any out-and-out Christianity would not have to be suppressed by most modern states today." Nevertheless it remains one of the great truths entrusted to the future by Jesus of Nazareth that those who know God, who have known him as the Heavenly Father, must insist before all men upon the Spirit of the Father prevailing in human society. It is a conception of amazing possibilities.

There are plenty of people in the world today who seem to consider themselves sent into the world to convince the church of sin and of judgment, and perhaps, with so many to help her to humility, the church may not be in too great peril of pride if for one self-indulgent moment she dare remind herself of her native greatness. It is her task, and has been through centuries now, the specific task of the Christian church, to lead this distracted world in the Master's daring prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven;" and more than any other she has ever been the critic of whatever is unheavenly, she has been the advocate of the godlike mind, and from this war she has acknowledged no discharge until the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. This dream, this crusade has been her inalienable business and if, alas, this wheat has not been unmixed with tares, at least it has never died. The church is the champion of man or she is none of Christ's. And though some of the greatest reforms have arisen outside the church, and though, more and more, agencies abound that perform their good works with no smallest acknowledgment of or relation to her, yet might not the church fairly speak much as Tennyson did to those who reported how all the young poets were imitating his methods and style? He reminded them that the seeds of the flower he had raised were stolen over the garden wall and that "most can raise the flowers now, for all have got the seeds."

Far and wide the seeds of the kingdom of God are being sown, often by those who have no idea of their source. The church does not begrudge this, even though she may do well occasionally to remind herself that to her supremely was committed the responsibility of nourishing the growing flower of the kingdom, that her defences have saved it when it might have perished, that her prayers and tears and sacrificial labors have encouraged its progress through many wintry years. But if she remind herself of this, let it not be in order to becloud her failures and disloyalties. Pray that the knowledge of past failures may chasten her into caution and consecration lest from her be taken the glory of this mandate! For amid her praises and her rituals stands One whom she calls "The Master."

IV. Life Raised to an Eternal Quality

By multitudes of people this thought of Jesus is not yet comprehended. Life raised to a new dimension was what he saw, not life as a mere unending extension. Not as a track running on indefinitely, but life continually multiplying, enlarging, and overflowing, true to the nature of life everywhere, which even in its physical forms divides the cells and multiplies, grows, divides and still multiplies, and so evermore abundantly. And like all life in another aspect, it is the "winning of freedom." Always evolving to higher expressions of itself, always moving out to wider powers, emerging from the confinement of environments that have become only a threat to the expanding thing, always up and out toward fullness, new adventure, higher sovereignty—that is life. That has been the way of life in all the laborious climb through the aeons. As life enlarges in the personality of man the dictations of instinct yield to higher guidance. Destructive instinctive forces become dynamic creative forces. "I have overcome the world," cried Jesus, and so does anyone in whom the tide of the eternal life rises to the flood. The days become too full for sound or foam. The mean frets, much more the meaner ferocities, are swallowed like deep, sunken rocks. There is a new richness of living which, like the peace of God, passeth understanding. Christ's thought was concerned with here and now, and his message was to living men. But in answer to questions that arise concerning the permanence of this expe-

rience, its extension beyond the grave, we may answer in the words of Rufus Jones: "It never occurred to Christ, and it never does to those who know from within what spiritual life means, that this life in God could be brought to a terminus by a disaster which wrecked the body or by its slow decay."

V. The Method of Redemption

Christ's way of moving men to higher levels of life showed a turning from the ancient methods. Man had long tried authority, had appealed to fear, had offered reward. Jesus showed no faith in these ways of making bad men good. The way of salvation, in his grand conception, lay elsewhere, in the subduing, arousing, releasing power of loving self-sacrifice for men. It is this that has given the cross its tremendous influence. The cross represents how far a man was prepared to go in loving the unlovely in order that he might move it to something better. Love that can be patient without calculation, love that can believe in the good that lies buried, love that is consciously deprived until responded to, that can lavish itself whether responded to or not, that can be scourged but cannot be made to hate, that can be crucified but cannot be made to die—love, wherein man draws nearest to the character of God himself and in that same hour also finds that he is able to wield the very power of God; love it is that breaks the heart of stone, calls the dead spirit from the tomb, infusing it with a strange and holy desire. The cross is a light upon which we cannot look! It scorches our selfish and hateful souls!

Whatever clash of theological opinion may have darkened the significance of the cross of Jesus, human experience has been quite definite before it. As men consider what it means they invariably have an impulse to fall prone crying: "Lord, have pity, I am a hateful man!" The poignant contrast of our peevishness, impatience, malignancy looms horribly in the presence of this higher spectacle. Partly on that account, it is this higher spectacle, this self-sacrificing love, which proves to be the only method of redemption. Men must be loved into life. Where love stands bleeding for other sins than its own, the ugliness of those sins appears never so repelling—to the sinner, also: and to the sinner, by the persuasions of this same love, the way back from his rags and his husks seems never so hopeful. The truth here is probably deeper, more essential, and more ultimate than any of us has even yet realized. Not love that waives the law or condones the wrong or sentimentalizes faults into virtues. No, but simply that which, by the grace of God, is so preoccupied in the interests of the loved that it is not conscious of its own wounds, that draws all men unto it because it is really what all men are aching for.

But who is sufficient for all this—except by the Holy Spirit? This truth, supported and made conquering by an illustration of it in the life of a Man, was worthy of the soul of a Christ, but who among us is large enough to bear a challenge like this? To go back to life and face again the things, the people, we have resented and there to remember this truth, and to be worthy of it until the redemptions of Christ are extended, and goodness arises in power, and by the way of love men become reconciled to God, who is Love—indeed, with man this is impossible! Yet, we have it from the lips of Christ, that with God all things are possible. And we shall pray for the Spirit that enableth, for that life of God in us whereby these things may be.

And here we end where we began, mindful of the measureless potency of ideas that break the world or build it. Yes, and here we say again that of all the ideas that have burned in the God-visited brain of man none are so passionate with promise for the world as those Five Truths which are central in the message of Christ.

A Spectator Becomes a Participant

By Tertius van Dyke

The Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, Before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly. Luke 22:61-62.

NOTHING is easier than to fall into the habit of looking upon life as a colorful pageant, to stand as a dispassionate observer and watch the scroll of events unrolled before our eyes. Especially is it a temptation to take this attitude today, when news of the whole astonishing world in which we live is thrust under our eyes pictorially and in writing. We can sit in our arm chairs and read what this or that explorer is doing in the regions of perpetual snow or in the jungles of Africa or South America. In the news reels we can see rebellions and soldiers going to war. India and China and the isles of the sea pass before us. How easy to become like a man in a dream. These persons and events seem to have nothing to do with us save as they supply a fleeting image on the eye quickly obscured by the next picture.

How subtly the sense of unreality creeps in. Life is reduced to an entertainment, to looking dreamily at a picture without reality and wondering vaguely about it. Conscience is drugged by the smooth passing of external events and life becomes broken up into two disconnected parts: the practical problem of bread, and the dream aspect of entertainment.

Especially perilous is such an attitude toward the gospel story. And yet it is not an uncommon attitude. We look at the pilgrimage of Jesus' earthly life as an astonishing pageant of far-off events. In countless churches the familiar picture of Jesus' last days in Jerusalem are unrolled before our wondering eyes. We gaze upon the dramatic scene, the colorful orien-

tal costumes, the trampling, jostling crowds, the troubled disciples, the serious Master enacting the enigma of a triumphal entry into the hands of his enemies. But do we see these events, not as the figures of a dream, but as something directly connected with the conduct of our own lives? Do they really affect our mode of living today? Are we different men and women today because Jesus lived and died nineteen hundred years ago? Or is this just another picture that passes before our sated eyes and is obscured as some other picture from the continuous pageant of the world comes into view?

In brief I put before you the profound question whether we are looking upon life, and more particularly the fact of Jesus' life, as a passing show, or are we trying to learn from him how to be changed from what we are into what God desires us to be? Are we dreamers in a world of unreality; or are we doers in a world of actuality? Have we not a part to play in the drama of life unfolding about us? Are we not actors as well as spectators?

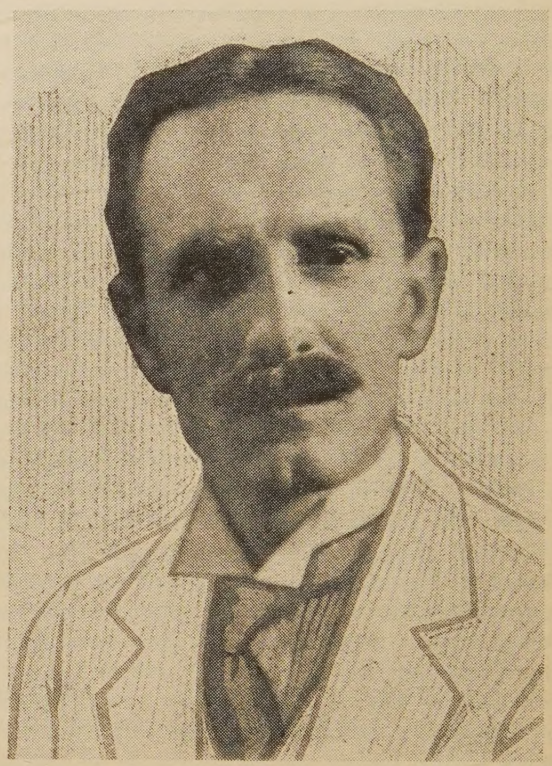
> Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
> Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
> And marching single in an endless file,
> Bring diadems and faggots in their hands.
> To each they offer gifts after his will,
> Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
> I in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
> Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
> Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
> Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
> Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

Turn now and look at that experience as it is described in the case of Peter in Jerusalem. No one was surer than Peter concerning his loyalty to Jesus. He had cast down his nets and followed Jesus. He had voiced for all the disciples the confession of faith in their hearts: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He had even boastfully declared: "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." Peter honestly thought that his loyalty was beyond question. He was a disciple. He was pledged to follow him. He was no passive spectator. He had a part to play in the great cause and a share with his Master. True enough, in Gethsemane he had fallen asleep instead of watching, but was that not a little slip natural to human nature? And was it not more than made up for by the futile but generous gesture of drawing his sword when the officers came to arrest his Master? And yet, when the great testing came, even Peter forgot that he had a part in that great drama and thought, for a time at least, that he was only an observer.

Peter's Bewilderment

Let us get the sorrowful event quite clear in our minds. Perhaps there was some justification for Peter's bewilderment when Jesus was led off as a prisoner. The one thing he had wanted to do in token of his loyalty—to fight—was forbidden by his Master. Maybe Peter had a touch of the sulks. Anyway, he followed afar off while the soldiers took Jesus to the high priest's house for prompt trial. Had he followed closely he might easily have been recognized as the pugnacious fellow who had cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. So he skulked along at a safe distance as one who had no concern except curiosity in the affair. Already Peter was stepping out of the role of actor and becoming a mere spectator.

Now the high priest's house was built in the oriental fashion around a courtyard on which opened the various rooms of the house. From the street entrance was had by a gate leading through a passage into the courtyard. In the passage was the porter's lodge, probably tended by a woman. And through this passage came



Willow, New York
TERTIUS VAN DYKE

the soldiers with their prisoner, and crossed the courtyard into the room where Jesus was set before the high priest.

Some of the soldiers and other persons in the crowd, having got past the porter's lodge, hesitated to enter the sacred precincts, and so assembled in the open courtyard. It was a cool night of early spring, so they lit a little fire, doubtless as much for comfort as for warmth. Peter also got through in the confusion and joined himself to the group about the fire. It was a perilous thing to do, though it looked like the safest thing to Peter. These were not the friends of Jesus. They were in reality his enemies. Peter was already beginning to compromise himself. For, as Dr. James Stalker, in his penetrating comment on the incident, says: "Not to confess Christ is the next step to denying him." Peter was trying to take a neutral position on a question where neutrality is impossible. The conversation about that fire was obviously hostile to Jesus. The tone of the questions asked Peter, and the fierceness of his rejoinders, clearly reveal that.

Perhaps the first person to accuse Peter of belonging with Jesus was the portress, who had let him into the courtyard, and who had been observing his hesitant and bewildered manner. We may imagine her edging up to the group in the firelight where Peter was doing his best to be unnoticed and, jerking her thumb at Peter: "This man also was with him." Then she stood with her hands on her hips, facing Peter's discomfiture. Poor man! as if he wasn't in trouble enough without having an observant, sharp-tongued woman jeering at him. "Woman!" shouted Peter, trying to cover his confusion, "I know him not!" Apparently the vehemence of the denial carried momentary weight. But suspicion was aroused and watchfulness followed. After a while, Peter was again accused: "Thou also art one of them." Again Peter denied, categorically. And then, apparently, Peter lost all control of himself, and, spurred by fear, plunged into the rough conversation about Jesus, to show that he did not belong with him. Suddenly another watchful observer confidently affirmed: "Of a truth, this man also was with him; *for he is a Galilean.*" Poor Peter, in trying to hide himself by talking in the manner of Jesus' enemies, had given himself away by his Galilean accent and manner. The welter of emotion within him had brought out his native characteristics, and he was discovered.

Recognition, Not Rebuke

Now, thoroughly terrified by his position, he burst into angry and blasphemous denials. And even while the torrent of denials was issuing from his lips, two things happened. A cock crew. And Jesus was led out of the high priest's chamber, to be taken to the guard room, and, turning as he passed, looked at Peter. It was not a look of recognition. No word of rebuke to his false disciple accompanied it. To show recognition or to speak to Peter would have been to betray him. And though Peter was just then engaged in denying Jesus, Jesus was not willing to betray Peter. He passed on to the guard room, surrounded by his clanging guard. But that poignant look brought Peter to his senses. He remembered now what Jesus had told him when he had boastfully declared: "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I," and he went out and wept bitterly.

Apparently no one interfered with his going. Peter was free from his tormenters. But the great fact was not his escape in the confusion, but his coming to himself at Jesus' look. In that look, Peter discovered that he could not be neutral in the great drama that was being enacted before him. His attempt to be a mere spectator, even if only for a little while, was a miserable failure. He learned that he was not only observing these tragic events, but that he was himself being looked at. Peter, too, was on trial, and the sorry figure that he saw himself to be, filled him with the bitterest regret. He plunged out into the darkness of night to weep, with convulsive sobs of grief. Alone, in the silent darkness of the deserted street, he raised his hands to heaven and shook to his soul with paroxysms of grief.

But it was not remorse that occasioned his tears. Remorse does not call forth the kind
wept. Remorse does indeed call fo
maudlin sobs, but quickly they dry
ness of despair. Remorse quickly
sane action of Judas, who "went out and hanged himself." The sense of shame and sin *alone* leads into despair and self-destruction, in one way or another. But Jesus' look, at which Peter wept, had in it that which not only made Peter rebuke himself; it had that in it which made Peter turn with hope and high resolve. He must indeed weep a little while in token of his repentance. But the fact is, that Peter went forth to a renewed and unshaken loyalty to his Master, which he sealed finally with a martyr's death. Peter saw in Jesus' look, not only condemnation, but also salvation.

Jesus' Look Wins Peter

For, after all, it is not the recognition of our sins that draws honest tears; it is kindness, gentleness, love suffering for our sins that opens the flood gates of honorable tears. When Peter saw Jesus looking at him, he saw not only his sinful self reflected in that gaze; he saw also the offer of another chance. He rushed out in convulsive grief, but, when the paroxysm of tears had passed, he went forth a gallant and indomitable disciple.

. . . The Christ, denied and scorned,
Looked upon Peter. Oh! to render plain,
By help of having loved a little and mourned,
That look of sovran love and sovran pain,
Which He, who could not sin, yet suffered, turned
On him who could reject, but not sustain.

The Savior looked on Peter. Aye, no word,
No gesture of reproach; the heavens serene,
Though heavy with armed justice, did not lean
Their thunders that way; the forsaken Lord
Looked only on the traitor. None record
What that look was; none guess; for those who have seen
Wronged lovers loving through a death-pang keen,
Or pale-cheeked martyrs smiling to a sword,
Have missed Jehovah at the judgment call.
And Peter, from the height of blasphemy—
"I never knew this man"—did quail and fall,
As knowing straight *that* God; and turned free,
And went out speechless from the face of all,
And filled the silence, weeping bitterly.

It was the love in the face of Jesus Christ that not only rebuked Peter to tears, but saved him to the life of an apostle. Henceforth, he was no more a spectator, but an active participant in the suffering and victory of Christ.

And must it not be so with us? For, in talking about Peter and his Master, we are really talking about Christ and ourselves. Nineteen centuries ago, Christ entered Jerusalem and looked upon Peter. Today, he enters our town and looks upon us. Judas betrayed him many years ago; Peter denied him; the pillars of society crucified him. But it is we who betray and deny and crucify him today. For one reason or another, we stand aside like Peter, and try to be

spectators in an event which calls for our active participation. On us, as on Peter, are turned the eyes of the eternal Christ. Reproach and pity and hope are there, all summed up in immortal love.

Will we not accept the message of that look, cleanse our lives with the burning tears of just repentance, and turn from the idle role of spectators to become active participants in the suffering and victory of Christ?

Christ and Pilate

By Charles R. Erdman

What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? Matthew 27:22.

PILATE was on trial before Christ. We do not usually read the story in that way. We usually think of Christ before Pilate. There is something of interest in the latter picture, whether painted on canvas or on the tablets of fancy. We see the Roman ruler on his judgment seat. About him are the guards and the signs of imperial power, and before him the patient helpless suffering Christ. But there is no real trial. No evidence is produced, no fault established. It is a sham, a travesty, a pretense, and its issue was a judicial murder. On the other hand, the trial of Pilate before Christ was a solemn reality. There character was revealed and a destiny determined. The most important question which Pontius Pilate had ever faced was this, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" By his answer to that question Pilate attained an immortality of infamy. Wherever the Christian creed is repeated, only two names are mentioned, that of Mary who brought Jesus into the world, and that of Pontius Pilate who sent Jesus to his death, "He suffered under Pontius Pilate." The answer of Pilate was the decisive act in Pilate's career.

That question is still the most important which any one can face. Wherever and however one finds himself in the presence of Christ, he is actually on trial. The answer which one gives to that question discloses the character and determines the destiny. Questions of health, of social position, of financial success, are all merely secondary and incidental to the one question which is supreme, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"

It is an inevitable question. It cannot be avoided. It demands a personal, immediate and definite reply.

Pilate was irritated and annoyed when the question was proposed. He had been aroused from his rest in the morning twilight. The Jews had brought to him a prisoner, demanding that the governor with no evidence produced should pronounce the sentence of death. He justly asked, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" The Jewish rulers reply with impudence, "If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Pilate, with scorn, flings back at them the reply, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law," knowing well that this subject people had no power to administer the death penalty. They were compelled to cringe and to admit, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Pilate despised and hated those who had brought him face to face with Christ, but with great wisdom he led the prisoner into the judgment hall, where he could speak with him alone, away from the angry crowd. He questions him as to his royal claims. He learns that his kingdom is one of spiritual ideals and is no political proposal. Christ had come to "bear witness unto the truth." Pilate replies with cynical bitterness, "What is truth?" and then returns to the eager mob with the reply, "I find in him no fault at all."

Facing the Facts

One may sometimes be irritated by the very way in which Christ is presented. The message may be too dogmatic, the proposals may appear impracticable, the Christian life may seem unattractive, but it is the part of wisdom seriously to face the facts, to listen carefully to the claims and promises of the Savior, and then to ask calmly and thoughtfully the supreme question, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"

Pilate tries to evade the question. He hears the chief priests cry out, "He stirreth up the people. . . . beginning from Galilee to this place." The word "Galilee" suggests to the governor a possible way of escape. Galilee was under the jurisdiction of Herod who happened to be in Jerusalem that very day. Pilate gladly sends Jesus to the king. He thus can avoid making answer. But Herod was unable to draw a confession of fault from the prisoner. He mocks his reported claim of kingship and sends him back to Pilate, who has become the more aroused and perplexed. What shall he do with Jesus?

One may postpone an answer, he may delay his decision, but the question will return. When once Christ has been presented a choice must be made, some answer must be given. What will you do with Jesus who is called Christ?

Pilate then attempts a compromise. He will brand Christ as a criminal yet save him from death. This he will do by following a custom of releasing at the feast some notable prisoner. He held one in custody by the name of Barabbas. He has been guilty of insurrection and murder. Surely no one would feel sympathy for him.

Jesus, on the contrary, was the idol of the crowd. They had welcomed him to the city a few days before with cries of "Hosannah," acclaiming him as Messiah and King. Pilate therefore asks, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" "But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus." The compromise had failed. Pilate had suffered defeat.

In attempting to steer a middle course the wretched governor now adopts a desperate plan. He will scourge Jesus and let him go. No punishment is more brutal and agonizing. The prisoner is stripped and bound to a post and cruel thorns are applied to his bare back

until the flesh is torn and the sufferer faints in agony. Bleeding and broken, Jesus is led back to the mob by Pilate, who appeals to their pity and feels that by such a sight their hatred will be appeased. "Behold the man," he cries; but the infuriated beasts have tasted blood and Pilate hears them cry, "Crucify him, crucify him."

There is no place for compromise when facing this supreme question. Each soul must make its choice. Christ must be crowned or crucified. "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"

Turner Studio

CHARLES R. ERDMAN

Pilate knew the reply which he should make. The voice of reason declared that he should acquit the innocent man. Pilate was a Roman ruler; he knew the law. He had sufficient power to carry out its demands. He had discovered that Jesus was guilty of no fault. There was no doubt in Pilate's mind. Reason made plain the decision which he should render.

The Voice of Reason

Nothing is more reasonable than to crown Jesus as Master and Lord. There is no question that the Christian life is one of purity, happiness, helpfulness and joy. Nothing could be more sensible than to admit his claims and to support his cause.

Then, too, there was the voice of affection. As Pilate returned to the judgment seat his wife sent unto him saying, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." As one faces the supreme question in life, does he not hear similar voices? What does a wife, a mother, a sister, a trusted friend advise as to your rightful relation to Christ? The tenderest bonds one has known draw him toward a right decision and warn against the folly and madness of a wrong choice.

There was a more solemn voice still. It was the voice of conscience, the very voice of God. Pilate knew what was right. Even that cruel tyrant has a certain rough sense of justice. Even the most seared and hardened conscience still retains some sense of the distinction between right and wrong. Pilate knew that he ought to heed that mysterious voice which was speaking within his own breast. He knew that he ought to take the side of Christ.

So conscience speaks today. There can be no question as to what the right answer would be. What shall I do with Jesus?

These voices, however, are drowned by other sounds. Pilate comes to hear only the cry of the crowd, "Crucify him, crucify him." There is little doubt that the voices of the world too frequently silence those other voices to which one would wisely give heed. It is pitifully true that the world today is against Christ. Men may be less brutal, less cruel than the Jewish mob which surged around the judgment seat of Pilate. But the world's verdict is adverse to Christ. Its cry to everyone who is facing this urgent question is not unchanged.

Self-Interest

What was it, however, in the voice of the multitude that finally determined the choice of the governor? "If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend." This was the fatal and final appeal; it was to self-interest. It was a threat on the part of the Jews to report to Caesar that Pilate had acquitted a man who claimed to be king. This might lead to Pilate's recall to Rome. Such a possibility he would not face; and he delivered up Jesus to be crucified. Self-interest would in reality make one decide in favor of Christ, but the world is able to make one believe that it demands the rejection of Christ or the exclusion of Christ from one's life.

Yet why did Pilate fail? In spite of the danger of personal loss, why did he not heed the voice of conscience, of reason and of love? It was because of his moral weakness. Pilate lacked the courage of his convictions. He was self-condemned because he was a coward.

Yet, who dares point a finger of scorn at this old Roman ruler? We may pity him, but we cannot but feel something of sympathy, for all of us have failed in times of testing. It would have required a very high degree of heroism to have imperiled all his ambitions in life for the sake of a strange mysterious fanatic whose blood was demanded by the people whom Pilate ruled.

It does require high moral courage to be true to Christ, yet what excuse can one give for refusing to crown him as Lord? Pilate had an excuse. Everyone does whose moral courage fails. He is always ready to shift the blame upon others or upon the circumstances of his life. Pilate takes water and in the presence of the mob he washes his hands, and we hear him say, "I am innocent of the blood of this just

person: see ye to it." How tragic! How futile! It is impossible for him to wash from his hands the blood with which they are forever red. Pilate has made the fatal choice. His soul is stained with guilt.

It is true, however, that the precious blood of Christ can wash away all stains from those who put their trust in him. Let the right answer now be made; let us crown him Lord and Master of our lives.

The Broken Bread

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By M. J. McPike

The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you. 1 *Corinthians* 11:23.

THE language of religion, generally speaking, is the language of symbols. The founders and leaders of the great world religions have always recognized that the complex relations which exist between God and man cannot be described in man-made words. Symbols themselves are very inadequate, but they are far better than words.

The Christian religion, in common with others, has from the first made use of symbolic language and ceremony. The chief Christian symbol is of course the cross. It typifies, as words could never do, the genius of the Christian faith. It is a constant and ever-present reminder of that unique and wondrous relationship between God and man as revealed in Christ Jesus on Calvary. It would indeed be difficult to estimate the tremendous influence made upon the life of the world by the symbol of the cross.

But there is another Christian symbol, given us by the Master himself, which for you and me should be more significant even than that of the cross. I refer to the symbol of the broken bread. In one sense the cross and the broken bread may be called twin symbols. They both exemplify the love of God for man; they both call our attention to the fact that God is constantly doing all in his power to help his erring children and win them back to himself. Yet these two symbols are different. The cross may be called a public symbol, intended for all the world to see. It is the emblem of the marching hosts of the conquering Kingdom. It is our ensign, by which we say to the world, not in words of boastful arrogance, but in terms of sacrificial love, "In this sign we conquer." The broken bread, however, is in no sense a public symbol; it is not intended to be shown to the world. It was given by the Master to be observed by his disciples in the intimacy of their fellowship. The cross reveals the great love of God for all mankind. The broken bread shows forth the unique relationship of Jesus with his friends, the inner circle of believers. The symbol of the cross is a world symbol; the symbol of the broken bread is reserved for those who love the Master. As such it is fitting that it be celebrated in the quietness and seclusion of the inner circle.

Whenever we think of the broken bread our thoughts go back to that scene in the Upper room where Jesus instituted the sacred ordinance. You will recall that it was the last time Jesus and his disciples were together; the last meal of which they partook in common; the last hour of fellowship one with another. It was a time when the disciples could have expressed their love and loyalty to their Master, and could have given him the human comfort of their fellowship and loving sympathy against his approaching agony. But plainly the disciples did not realize the terrific strain of soul which their Master was undergoing in that hour. In charity, we must think that they did not comprehend the fact that the divine hour of his testing had arrived. Yet had he not told them of it again and again? Had he not prepared them for it? We must not make excuses for the Twelve; they themselves would not want us to do so. The shameful truth of the matter, as Luke points out, was this: In the upper room that night of nights, the confessed followers of the Son of Man were so occupied with quarreling over their own ambitions for place that they gave no thought to the feelings and the needs of their Master, who already stood in the shadow of the cross!

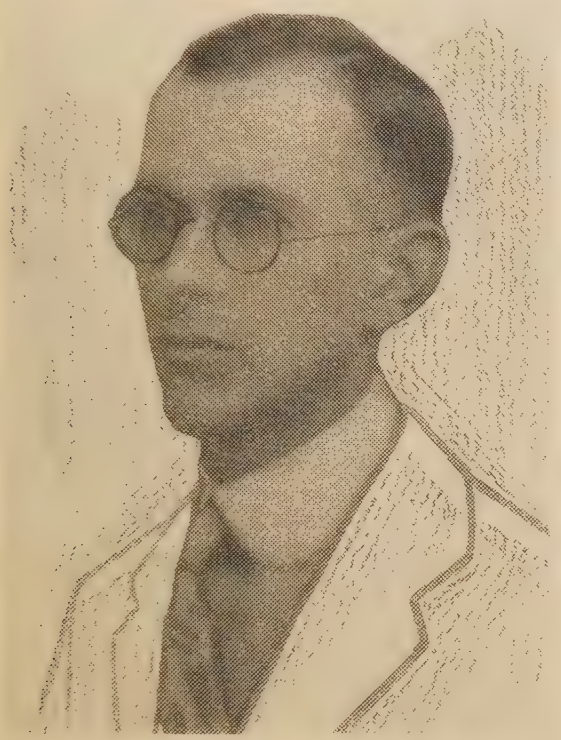
Do We Deny Jesus?

A sad commentary indeed upon those first disciples. But lest we condemn them too severely, should we not pause and consider that we, his present-day followers, with the mistakes and failures and bitter remorse of sixty generations of disciples to profit by, time and again, when our opportunity comes for serving him, can think of nothing at all but our own miserable selves? How John and Peter and James and the others, in later years, must have bitterly regretted that they were so insensitive toward their Master in his hour of need. And they must have recalled that he did not condemn them for it; not one word of rebuke fell from his lips. Yet that did not ease the sting of their remorse. And for you and me today, because of our lack of loyalty to him, he gives us no rebuke—except the rebuke of silence. May it not be, after all, that the rebuke of silence is the very sternest of all? Peter found it so and went out and wept bitterly; which must be set down to Peter's credit, for it was the turning point in his life; never again did he deny his Lord. Can that be said of you and me? There have been times when we, too, felt that silent rebuke. Did it strike through to our hearts, or did we in word or deed continue to deny him?

As the disciples recalled to mind their Last Supper with Jesus, there was one thing that greatly overshadowed his silent rebuke, and that was the disclosure of Jesus' great love for them, his disciples. They were, as he himself said, his friends. In later years they found it exceedingly difficult to realize that

he had so loved them; for they had been so unworthy. Yet they knew it was true. He told them of his love over and over again. Did he not reveal it by his every action, his every word, yea, his every gesture? Unbelievable, his love for them, but it was true! As John grandly put it: "Having loved his own he loved them unto the end."

It was his love for them that he was trying to impress upon their minds in the symbol of the broken bread. Taking a loaf, he broke it into pieces and gave each disciple a part: "This," he said, "is my body,



M. J. McPike

broken for you." And with that he placed it in their hands, that holding it they might understand what he meant. He would have them know that the bread, representing his body, represented all of his power, all of his love, all of himself, and it was all for them. He held nothing back. His love for them would go to the limit, would stop at nothing, would surmount any obstacle in order that they might be blessed. "Greater love," he had once told them, "hath no man than this, that a man will lay down his life for his friends." And now because of his love for them, his friends, he is ready to pay love's final sacrifice.

But before he gave the bread to the disciples he broke it, saying, "This is my body, which is *broken* for you." The Twelve did not understand then the mending of the broken body—could not comprehend why it should ever be broken at all. But there came a day when, looking back upon Calvary, they did understand. By and by they came to realize the terrible truth of it all, that the Son of God must die upon a cross of shame in order that the calloused hearts of men might know how much he loved them, and knowing, might give their hearts to him.

In that great drama, Joan of Arc, Bernard Shaw puts these words upon the lips of the Maid of Orleans, after she has been threatened with death at the stake by dignitaries of church and state: "If I go through fire, I shall go to the hearts of the people." The threat became a reality; Joan of Arc was burned at the stake; but even as she had prophesied, she went through fire to the hearts of the people, and they proclaimed her martyr, saint and savior. Was not that what Jesus did on Golgotha? What he could not do by his words, or by his deeds, or even by his life, he accomplished by his death. He "went through fire to the hearts of the people." For the love shown forth on Calvary is understandable to the simplest heart and makes its appeal to all mankind. Verily, the Son of God must be broken in order that men might understand. And it was this that the Master signified when he gave the broken bread to the Twelve.

Dr. Arthur John Gossip of Scotland, in his book, "From the Edge of the Crowd," recalls an experience of his in the shell-torn battlefields of France. "One day," he says, "I came on a dead laddie, lying all alone. Why, out of all the multitudes one saw, he so affected me, I do not know. But he was Scottish, and he was young and very handsome, and somebody's dearest. And, somehow, the dead eyes seemed to look up into mine with solemn challenge; and the dead lips to cry aloud till my heart heard, 'This is my body, broken for you.' And there we had a communion service of a kind, just we three, the Lord Christ, the dead laddie, and my soul; and I swore that because he had died for us, please God, I would be worthier for that sacrifice."

Broken for Me!

That must have been the impression left upon the minds of the disciples whenever they thought of that scene in the upper room—the breaking of the bread and the sacrifice which it portrayed. It must have come home to them with terrific force: He was broken for me, for me, for me! Not this disciple, not that one, not the one who sat across the table from me—my Lord was broken for me! And was not that what Jesus intended them to know? "This is my body which is broken," he had said, "and it is for you, for you, for you." Twelve separate times. And, oh, what disappointing disciples they were, how slow to understand, how unworthy of his love; yet not one was omitted. "It is for you," he said to James, "and for you," he told John. Thomas was there, with his doubts and misgivings: "For you," said the Master. And what of Peter? Poor, impulsive Peter, who was to deny his Lord thrice within the hour? "For you," said Christ. And Judas? Surely Judas would be left out. But to him also Jesus gave the broken bread in final token of a love that knows no limit: "For you."

Thus they received the broken bread and in silence they partook of it. How unworthy they were in that hour! Yet their Master had invited them, and it was enough. Today, we too feel our unworthiness to ap-

proach the table, yet I think we should come. Unworthy guests of the Lord Jesus, to be sure. But he knows our unworthiness, our unfitness, and still he bids us come. Even now he stands here before the table, looking for you, eager to tell you that he wants you—you who are his friend, you who mean so much to him. Unworthy though we are, he loves us every one and does not want us to stay away. For if we are his at all, to each of us also belongs that supremely gracious title, "The disciple whom Jesus loves."

"Be of Good Cheer!"

By George Stewart

In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. John 16:33.

"MOST men live in mild desperation," says a character in Philip Barry's play, "You and I." This apparently cynical statement is literal truth. Most men and women live in a perennial state of tribulation. Hampered by heredity, limited in talent, conditioned by home life, burdened with work, or defeated through some weakness, we find ourselves seasoned to humiliation, but mildly desperate.

Jesus was aware of these circumstances. He was not dealing with men and women in the abstract, but with actual husbands, wives, artisans and farmers. These men and women had to work or starve; they had as much to irritate them as we have; they were as happy or as unhappy in their work as are we. They were ordinary men and women, earning their bread by the sweat of their brows, subject to temptation, to fright, to foolish ideas. Jesus promised no Utopias with four-day weeks and six-hour days, where food would be plentiful, where the climate would be mild, and we would be surrounded with sweet-tempered associates in a perpetual state of bliss. He simply and realistically stated, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Most men live in mild desperation, yes; but with resources available in Jesus to give joy and zest to the adventure.

Holy week reminds us of the profundity of Jesus' statement. In the blackest hour of his apparent utter loss, he was to give his day and ours good cause to look up in hope. Consider the cross as man's best reason for faith. To discouraged men and women Good Friday is a reminder that out of weakness God ordains strength and out of apparent loss he brings the ultimate victory.

I

Many persons are discouraged with themselves. They have given their affection and have seen it received, utilized—and unappreciated. They have yearned for friendship and have been more than willing to go the second mile. There has been no limit to their eagerness to serve. Faithfulness, perseverance and unselfish love have gone into their friendly approach to other lives, and yet they have found their gift unwanted and they remain apparently friendless.

A Lonely Figure

Jesus faced that. In Nazareth he would have poured out the riches of his mind for love of old playmates and associates at the bench. In Galilee and Judea he healed and taught a multitude, but only a few took him for what he was. There were Zacchæus, a centurion, the woman at the well, and a handful of others. Standing on the Mount of Olives, on his last visit to Jerusalem, he wept over the city and cried out in heartbroken compassion, "Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Is that not the cry of everyone who has offered his affection and had it refused? Jesus had earned the right, even before the loneliness of the garden, to say, "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Those who find they are not wanted as friends can take heart as they contemplate that lonely figure in the garden.

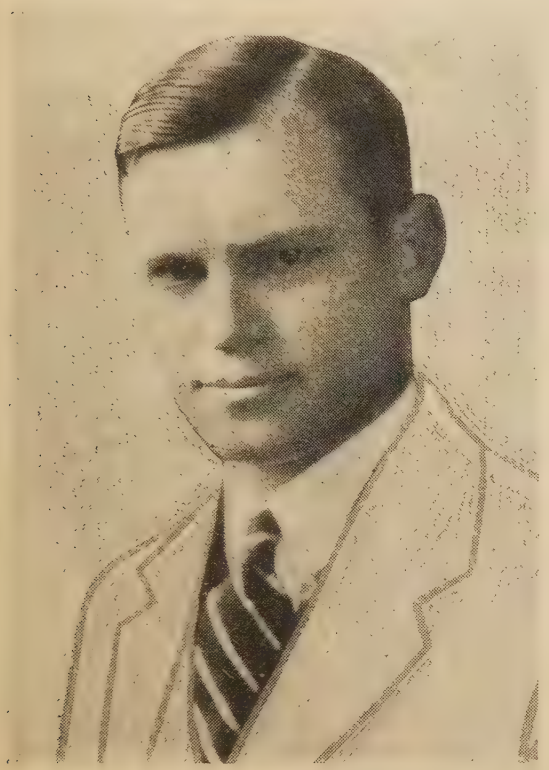
Many are discouraged because their ideas have been rejected. Having smelted the pure gold of truth from the raw debris of life and having offered to others these ideas—their hard-learned lessons, the distilled wisdom of the years—they have had them rejected. That which they could do, it is impossible to do, for no one cares for their ideas or the testimony of their experience. This was a familiar experience to Jesus. Did he not seek to distinguish between inward value and outward show? Did he not point out to those swollen with pride that the meek should inherit the earth? Did he not show the way of simple friendliness as the best way of all? Did he not at his trial answer truthfully when they asked him if he was the Son of God, and did they not mock him for his truth? All who have been eager to give their beauty, their wit, or their wisdom and have had it scorned, find a comrade in that silent figure crowned with thorns, with the reed placed in his hand for a jest. That reed would sway a larger empire than any golden scepter. Jesus was a sorry figure, but a regal one. All their jeers and false trappings could not obscure his majesty.

The Agony of Rejection

It is strange how silent Jesus was on that last day. He made a few courteous and gentle answers to those who baited him, and spoke seven anguished sentences from the cross. He spoke seldom in those last hours because they would not listen. The cross should make his plea at the bar of human judgment. In this world he had tribulation: his idea of life, his scale of values, were rejected. All who see their best ideas apparently fail can look at him, raised aloft on Good Friday, and take heart.

Others are discouraged because they find their personalities are rejected. The soul of a person finds es-

cape through some subtle charm or winsome grace. The culture of a man is measured by his consideration for others, the delicacy of his appreciation, his eagerness to please and be of service. Everyone has certain moods, certain points of view, certain graces which make him acceptable, or the lack of which leaves him in isolation. Jesus had to win his friends at Nazareth, as any other boy. He had to choose and keep his disciples by no little skill and teaching. He put forth what efforts were possible to hold his friends true in that last week of crisis; but he faced a hard



Underwood and Underwood

GEORGE STEWART

hour when he found that he was left alone and deserted by his associates. "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Jesus' faith in human friendship was so deep that he believed it would come back, even when it had ceased to exist. Those who are discouraged with themselves will find in him reason to look up even with gratitude for dark hours, and take heart.

II

Large numbers are also discouraged with their work. They have seen the labor of a lifetime, in rearing a child, go for naught. They have given heroically to build up a school, to see it fail when no strength remains to try again; they have labored unceasingly to strengthen a church, to see themselves helpless in the vast ebb and flow of population before economic pressure and increasing rentals. Others have saved for old age, fighting a losing battle against physical disability and unemployment. Worst of all, they have faced the stark fact that in the eyes of the world their work has been wasted. Their life seems to have been marked with futility.

But how like a failure seemed Jesus' life! Only one leper out of ten returned to give him thanks. Only a few women, among them his closest relatives, gathered at the cross. Only Joseph of Arimathea offered Jesus a place for burial. One always has a feeling of special kindliness toward Joseph for this gracious act. From the standpoint of ordinary men, Jesus' life work was destroyed as if some Roman soldier had thrust his iron pike through the playhouse of a child. In the eyes of his generation he had attempted to "give airy nothing a local habitation and a name," to build a kingdom based upon spiritual values—love, honesty, purity, compassion—and now all his work was dust and ashes, a puff in the wind.

How he must have searched his heart on that last day. John Masefield, in his play, "The Trial of Jesus," reveals the voice of worldly Wisdom arguing with Jesus about the course his life was taking:

Says *Wisdom:*
What if the trial be too grim a test?
What if your body or your soul surrender
And you deny your teaching, so that men
May ease your torment, spare and set you free?
So that you live indeed, but live despised
Even by yourself. You are not toughly knit.
Surrender may be the end of all your thought.

Jesus: My soul is sorrowful even unto death.

Wisdom: Sorrow and death await you in few hours,
If you persist upon your chosen course.
Yet you have time to fly, to return home,
Comfort your mother, live as other men,
And taste the happiness of men on earth,
With wife and children, friends and fair old age.

Jesus: O God, my Father, if it be possible,
If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,
Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Wisdom: The cup thy Father gives, wilt thou not drink?

Jesus: O friend, I am the cup my Father gives,
The blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

Wisdom: God has created all men for his glory.
He has sent words to men to be their help:
"Behold, I will do a new thing . . . shall ye not know it?
I will even make a way in the wilderness."

Jesus: If this cup may not pass, except I drink,
I will; thy will be done.

Wisdom: Life comes to you;
Life will be with you; even on the cross
You will be one with life,
Wrung out of suffering. Life is the solace.

Jesus passed through the uttermost woe of human discouragement because of his life work, and earned the right to say to all who are discouraged with their

daily toil: "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

III

There are many, also, who are discouraged by the vast anonymity we call life. Although no particular disaster has broken, no calamity has burst family ties asunder, no dark shadow blotted out the sun, still the way of life has become increasingly steep and stony. Stevenson used to cry out at the unnecessary suffering and pain about us and he who scrutinizes life carefully will admit that there is much to cause one to draw back in astonishment. Pain of birth, black tragedy of death, broken confidences, defeated plans, useless waste in industry, the miscarriage of justice, the unspirituality of the church, are all immensely discouraging to the sensitive heart. Most men do live in mild desperation: they are discouraged with life.

But it was to grapple with the gravest problem, to wrestle with the darkest doubts, to face life in its fiercest, most hypocritical and cruel aspects, that Jesus went to Jerusalem and to death. Fatigue and weariness rested upon him, too. For him the blast of winter was as chill and the summer sun as hot as for any other. The thorn was as bitter, the rose as sweet for him as for his friends at Nazareth, the loneliness as sharp, the humiliation as keen as for any human heart. There was this difference, however: he saw in voluntary suffering the best device of God and man to reshape life by its sheer arresting power, and they saw only loss. They saw only the blackness of endless night, surrounding a few years of hurried toil. He saw the radiance of endless day, surrounding a life here which is a preparatory school for a larger life to come. They saw pain as a bitter calamity: he saw pain as a means of educating men and women as to the relative merits of goodness and the cruelty of sin. Many are discouraged about life in general, but he knew life and loved it, knew its troubles and its sorrows, and still was able to say, "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The captive world awak't and found
The prisoners loose, the jailer bound.

O deare and sweet dispute
'Twixt death's and love's far different fruite,
Different as far
As antidote and poisons are:
By the first fatal Tree
Both life and libertie
Were sold and slaine,
By this they both look up, and live againe.

O strange and mysterious strife,
Of open death and hidden life:
When on the crosse my King did bleed,
Life seemed to die, Death died indeed.

The cross is the measure of the love of God in Jesus Christ; it means new life to fainting hearts, new courage to those who are disappointed in themselves or in their work, new hope to those who are defeated before life itself.

The Cup of Life

By Carl C. Seitter

My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. *Matthew* 26:39.

THE cup of life is pressed to every lip. Each must drink its contents. A compound of light and dark, sweet and bitter, good and bad, pleasing and distasteful is within the cup. Whether we like it or not, we have to drink it. There is enough of the bitter, the bad, the dark, the distasteful to furnish a broad foundation for a carping cynicism. Many there are who have been overwhelmed till they have found grounds for nothing but a hopeless rebellion or defeat. All that is ill has been assembled and hurled into the teeth of God or of man with the despairing cry, "What's the use?"

Some months ago the stock market crashed. The day following the crash, a man hurtled from the upper floor of a New York hotel to the pavement below. Prominent in Wall street, he had been caught in the decline and decided the game was not worth the candle.

The doctor came out of the sick room. In low tones, he told the members of the family that the sick one had an incurable disease. Faces blanched, hands were clenched. There was a sob or two as imaginations leaped out into the future trying to sketch a picture. The next day the lifeless form of the father was found and near it a note which said that life held nothing without one who was sick unto death. So he had snuffed out his own life and gone his way. Behind him he left the suffering mother and the helpless brood. But he was out of it all. That was all he cared.

Death walked into a house one day, taking the husband and father. Without so much as an effort, the wife gave herself over to a tormenting and abject grief. She kept the wound of her heart open, spending literally hours every day upon the grave of the deceased. Months passed. No one could get her to change her habits or her thoughts. Her mind snapped under the strain and she had to be committed to an institution for the insane.

The Inevitableness of Tragedy

Into the cup of life which each must drink, there is bound to be some of that tragedy we would like to miss. It is inevitable. We are normal in trying to avoid it. That one is abnormal who seeks it. But when it comes, character is proclaimed by the way in which we deal with it.

Some make a great commotion about pain. Probably most of us are pretty poor sports when we suffer pain, especially if the hurt doesn't amount to enough to be seen without calling attention to it. The little nagging hurts that need advertising in order to be known, usually get it. We are pretty well accustomed to discounting that. We exaggerate it ourselves, so

we decide most others do also. That takes care of itself without great significance one way or the other, unless it becomes too chronic.

Sometimes we just give up and want to die, or we are imperious and sharp, exacting a terrible toll from our loved ones in the wicked lashing of our tongues. We give way to our pain and make life a hell on earth for all around us, with no appreciable relief to ourselves. We demonstrate very adequately that we are not strong enough to be healthy minded even though the body be sick.

The cup of life contains pain. You do not want it. But you get it. All your wailing does not ease it a bit. In fact, it doubles and trebles the suffering because it centers your attention on it when there might be other things to think about. And it makes life a burden for those around you. No Christian spirit would permit that for an instant. "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ" is good scripture, and it is good sense for those who suffer.

Emergencies of Life

It is said that a Paris hairdresser is having a house made entirely of glass built for himself. In it will be a bed of pure crystal. And he says: "When I die this bed will be my bier and on it I will be placed in the magnificent tomb I have already built." Such transparency of living is too frequent for comfort. It is a perfect description of so many sufferers, even down to the magnificent tombs they have already constructed

A Lenten Prayer

By Harold C. Phillips

ETERNAL God our Father, we seek fellowship with Thee. Thee do we crave, and not Thy gifts. Prepare our hearts for fellowship. We know that we find Thee only as we seek Thee with our whole heart. Often do we worship Thee with our lips when our hearts are far from Thee. We have said our prayers, but we have not prayed. We have uttered our words in the Father's house but our hearts have been in the far country. Set our thoughts now, we pray Thee, on the things above. Dispel the earthborn clouds that hide from us the everlasting hills.

We seek fellowship with Thee, O Spirit of God, because our hearts yearn for that which is real. We have followed the mirages of life, and they have deceived us. We have heeded the luring voices of life, but they have betrayed us. What is all our restlessness, our endless activity, our fickleness and our fears but the crying of our hearts for God—for the Living God? Amid life's shifting sands we long to place our feet upon the rock. Amid the passing scenes we grope for what is permanent. We are distrustful of prices that rise and fall. We covet the values that are eternal. Teach us that our deepest need is our need of Thee.

Some of us are seeking the answer to our need by the endless possession of things. We have pulled down our barns and built greater. But we are not satisfied. To all our getting there comes the haunting sense of futility, for in the secret places of our hearts we have heard Thy voice, "What shall it profit?" Our souls are starved. They cry for bread and we but give them stones. But we thank Thee that Thou hast revealed to us the Bread of Life—life in a Cross! We had not expected to find life there. A cross seemed to us a denial of life. Teach us that the way of the cross is the way to reality. Help us to see that no material success can ever compensate for our moral failures. Help us to know that the way of life lies not in the getting of things, but in the giving of self. And if to our hard hearts, slow to believe, this still seems foolishness, enlighten us, we pray, with that wisdom which is from above. Deliver us from the tyranny of our narrow logic. Keep us from the wide gate and the broad way which deceive because they are so obvious. Subdue our stubborn wills until they cry, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

Others of us, in trying to meet our needs, have lost the longer look. We prefer small certainties to large possibilities—the flesh pots of Egypt to the Promised Land. We are losing our faith in life. We live as children of time, when Thou hast made us for eternity. We take the cup of selfish pleasure because it is at hand. For the sake of immediate results we sacrifice our honor and our honesty. But we are not satisfied. We are disillusioned. For deep in our hearts there is the fear that for a mess of pottage we have sold our birthright. In our sober moments our profit seems cruel loss. But we thank Thee that Thou hast revealed the Way of Life—a Way that leads to Calvary!

Help us to see that every selfish path is a blind street. Show us that nothing is ultimately real that betrays those deeper instincts of the soul. May the cross of Jesus, which has outlived all selfish thrones of lust and greed, pride and power, save us from our moral cowardice, and from the slavery of our sins. May it enkindle again our faith in the ultimate meaning of life. By His cross, O God, may we be taught life's supreme lesson, that the only path that leads to life is the path of sacrificial love—the love that succeeds even in failure, is victorious even in defeat, and lives through death. Thus may we become partakers of His Eternal Life. We offer our prayer in His name. Amen.

for themselves. In the cup of life, then, is likely to be pain. Even so, drink it.

The cup of life will contain emergencies that you would give anything to avoid. Financial reverses, personal accidents, failures of pet plans—these are almost inevitable. It is the easiest thing in the world to get licked at any one of these places. There is no truer test of character than that which shows in such times of emergency.

To some, the emergencies of life furnish the material out of which stalwart character is made. How many times we have read of men and women of strength who were started along the way of success by the coming of an emergency which they rose to meet. And how many wrecks there are who come with pitiful tales of the crises of life that swept them from their moorings. But emergencies are in the cup of life. If we would be true to our best, we will have to take them with the other things and make of them something worth while.

Meeting the Inevitable

One of the most difficult things for the human heart to do seems to be to adjust itself to inevitable situations which are contrary to hopes and aspirations. Often there is a desperate refusal to accept as fact the death of a loved one, or the loss of an opportunity. "It just can't be so," we declare. It is an attempt to escape the consequences by denying the fact. And it can result in nothing but personal ruin. There is nothing more tragically pathetic than the figure of one fighting against the acceptance of what is inevitable.

We all need to recognize the fact that certain inevitable things will come. The events that have passed cannot be recalled. Life must be lived with them as the background. Their factuality must be recognized. But tomorrow is the day toward which we build.

These things—pain, crises, inevitables—are in the cup of life. We are not determined by them. They may come into two lives and entirely different results be found. Ella Wheeler Wilcox has expressed it well in her verses:

> One ship drives east and another west,
> While the selfsame breezes blow;
> 'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale
> That bids them where to go.
>
> Like the winds of the air are the ways of fate,
> As we journey along through life;
> 'Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal,
> And not the storm or the strife.

The "set of the soul" is important. Here the Christian faith performs its matchless function. It does two things.

A Long View of Life

First, it gives us a longer and a broader view of life than is gained through any other means. Browning sensed this in his poem "Rabbi Ben Ezra."

> Our times are in his hand
> Who saith, "A whole I planned,
> Youth shows but half; trust God:
> See all, nor be afraid."

When we look at life through the eyes of Christ we see its purposes lying deeper than the pleasure or comfort of the moment. If that were all we find in life, then we would be justified in suicide the moment these pleasures ceased. But there is more than the pleasure of body and mind. Life is more than food, raiment, music, laughter. These are part of it. But beyond them is the realm of the eternal values, God and the soul. Life is eternal. When today and its pleasures are all spent, life in its essence still remains, not diminished by the passing of time, but enriched by the growth of experience. We live, not for one fleeting minute of time, but for the endless reaches of eternity.

Carl C. Seitter

It was this that made it possible for Jesus to pray as he did in the garden. "If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." He recognized more in life than the attainment of the moment. And it is always so in human life when our judgments are coolly formed. Who lays down his life for a passing pleasure is counted a fool. Who spends his life in the defense or pursuit of an ideal is a hero.

Partners with God

But our Christian faith does something more than simply to lengthen and broaden our view of life: it makes us partners with God! It gives us Jesus Christ, saying, "Take my yoke upon you." We do not pull our load alone. We have a team-mate. And this, in itself, is the power which will enable us to use all that is in the cup of life rather than be used by it. We become aware of God's concern for us. That is a help, for nothing is better for our strengthening than

the knowledge that we are not alone. Hardship is bitter, but hardship coupled with a sense of loneliness is crushing. The presence of one to share our trouble is a source of strength. And when that One is God, the help becomes divine.

Fanny Crosby became blind when she was about six years old. Much of her life was spent in suffering, facing the severe hardships of the blind. And Fanny Crosby is a source of inspiration to thousands. She sang, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine," and now we all sing it. She sang, "Savior, more than life to me," and our hearts respond to the encouragement of the thought.

Paul had misery enough in his bones to down the most ardent. Constantly beset by pain and embarrassment, he continued to do the work of a legion. And with what spirit! Listen to these words: "For our light affliction which is but for the moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

This is not the bleat of a defeated man. Paul had found a divine strength which took his weakness and made it powerful for Christ. He released himself because he was linked with God in the service of humanity.

The triumphant note of the Christian is, not that he can cajole God into letting him escape the hard places of life—Christ did not, neither did Paul—but that he can meet them with victory in his heart.

Repent!

By Paul Jones

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Matthew 3:3.

FOR the most part, repentance, as a word, seems to have dropped out of our religious vocabulary. The churches which have a liturgy are still exposed to the sound of it, but for most people in the church, and all outside, it carries very little significance today. The current slogan, "Don't knock, boost!" emphasizes the common desire to get away from and keep away from unpleasant facts rather than face them, and it is typical of that attitude that a group of college students on a true and false test recently indicated that the statement, "Sin should not be emphasized in religious teaching," was true by a vote of twenty-four to two, with four uncertain.

Even though Lent is being more generally observed than previously, the observance quite frequently takes the form of church loyalty crusades to get people to church, or of special efforts to raise money, rather than making it a penitential season. Dr. John Herman Randall, Jr., has truly observed, "This waning of the 'sense of sin' in almost a single generation is one of the remarkable religious phenomena of our times."

Why has it gone? There is no question but that it is fundamental in the teaching of Jesus, and there is general agreement that repentance, as he used the term, means a change of mind expressed in changed life and changed relationships. Why has it lost its vitality for us?

Personal Responsibility Gone

The answer is significant, and quite a definite answer can be given. In the first place, it is due to a general decline in the sense of personal responsibility which has been taking place. With the advance of scientific knowledge, philosophical determinism has had an increasing popular vogue and there consequently appears to be less scope for responsible personal action in the universe. In the realm of history there has been an increasing acceptance of the idea that in general the thinking of any group is quite largely determined by the way in which it makes its living. More recently, behaviorism has brought those same limitations imposed by the universe and the group down to the individual. We are told that all our choices and decisions are simply the result of previous conditioning, and that if one could know every detail of the experiences which a person had had one could predict his actions in any given situation. Under the circumstances, it is no wonder that people, feeling that they are creatures of their heredity, their environment and their experience, raise the question as to why they should repent of words or actions for which they are not responsible.

The God of Today

More than that, there has been a change in the conception of God which also has a bearing on this matter of repentance. For many people the thought of God has become less anthropomorphic and less intimately personal. They may use personal terms in addressing him; but if they think of God as "idealized reality," or an "integrating force" in the universe, or as a process, or an influence, there can be little sense of any offense to God in the things they may do. How can a force or a process dealing with an illimitable universe be concerned with some minor human action, so why repent?

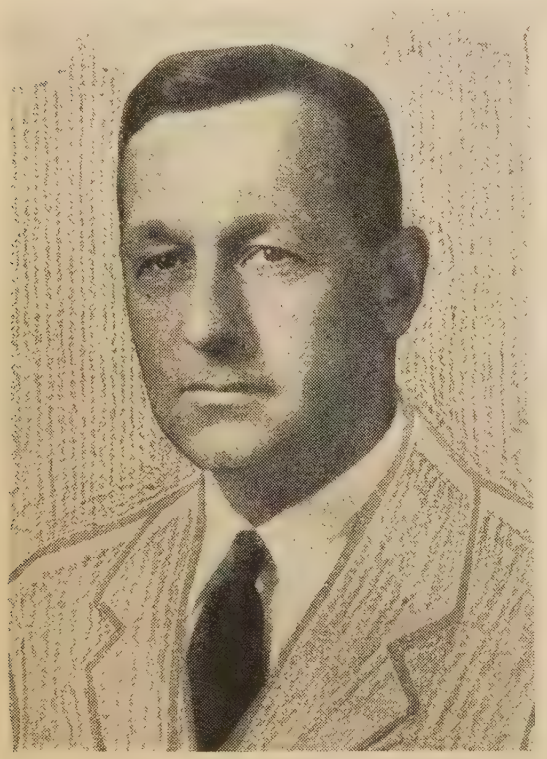
Whether we like it or not, the idea of repentance in the old personal form has gone, and the church cannot bring it back. If that were all that had happened, we might let the matter rest there, regretfully perhaps, but finally.

At the same time that these changes have been taking place in people's conceptions, however, a greater change has been going on, of which they are, in part, the expression. Life has been becoming more and more socialized. Interdependence is becoming increasingly the note of our common life. Industry is handled by corporations in place of individual owners, chain stores replace the single merchant, the radio and movies universalize our thinking and amusements, and even na-

tions are reluctantly recognizing that their welfare is bound up together. Whitehead has summed up the present need in the phrase, "The problem is not how to produce great men, but how to produce great societies."

Social Salvation

In that situation lies the key to the answer to this question of repentance. The old repentance belonged to an intensely individualistic conception of life which has gone. Today we are being forced to recognize that "we are members one of another," and a new conception of moral responsibility to replace the outworn one is coming to birth.



PAUL JONES

"The coming of what has been called the 'great society,'" says Richard Roberts, "has produced an extent and an intensity of collective moral responsibility which is different from anything that the world has ever hitherto seen. The one thing that is clearly no longer possible (even if it ever was) is for a man to try to 'cut out' of this welter and save his own soul. He cannot so lightly escape the vast common collective guilt. Never was it so plain that if we would be saved, we must be saved together. Personal salvation and social salvation belong indissolubly to one another. It will be characteristic of a Christian society that it will not leave the great tasks of forgiveness and restitution to its individual members. It will express its own soul in great collective acts of atonement. This will serve to show how far a cry it is even at this late day to anything that might be called a Christian society."

In a word, we must recognize that the conditions which are going to determine the lives, the welfare, the choices and the actions of millions of people are in our hands. Today we can no longer so lightly blame the individual for what he does, but must instead develop a corporate sense of repentance for the things that we have as a group done or left undone, which have conditioned that individual.

Repentance Needed

We must recognize that we have permitted social injustice with its blighting effect on untold lives, that we have been complacent in the face of recurring periods of unemployment with its terrific moral and physical waste, that we have been acquiescent in discrimination against various races, that we have been self-righteous in the punishment of offenders, that we have been proud of our imperialism, that we have again and again condoned war—and all of these things to the detriment of the lives and standards of the whole human family. And recognizing our responsibility and repenting of it will mean that we must set about definitely changing those conditions which still wreak this moral havoc.

And the pressure toward this repentance will be all the stronger as we bring our recognition of the situation into touch with the modern thought of God. If he is the person, or the power, or the force that is making for adjustment, harmony, integration or beauty in the universe, these divisive ruthless conflicts which we have condoned will be seen not only as offenses against God but denials of his very being.

Social Regeneration

Bishop Gore has told us that "The Kingdom is nothing less than all human society regenerated until it shall be according to the will of God." We can let our individualistic idea of repentance go, as the society which it fitted has gone; but until society has been regenerated, we shall need the driving force of the new repentance to spur us to the unfinished task of the Savior. And if the church of today can turn from its preoccupation with individual failures and peccadillos and face its corporate failure with a determination now to seek the Kingdom and build it, it may even yet become reborn with power from on high.

The Cross

THEY took Him out when the dew was fair
And the Eastern sky was aflame,
They showed him a cross, all stark and bare,
A thing of dishonor and shame.
And they supposed, when they nailed Him there,
No one would believe in His name.

The Christ lives on, and the cross to-day
Has become a symbol of grace,
And the marching world must see its ray,
For its light is in every place.
So take up your cross and go His way,
In that is the hope of the race.

WARREN W. CHURCHILL.

The Happy Ages

By John Ray Ewers

For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. 1 *John* 5:4.

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON says that the happy ages are those of faith. He is right. An age of doubt is an unhappy age. All men are in quest of certainty, but where shall we find it? Must we wait until we rest in security before we begin to live fully? Faith is not sight, but faith must afford such confidence that action becomes spontaneous. Faith must give hope and cheer. The happy ages of the Christian church have been those of faith. Mr. Chesterton was asked why he had gone into the Catholic church. He answered: "Because it has settled all the questions over which you Protestants are still wrangling; because it is the only church, which joining, one may cease to be the child of his own age." He found his security in the arms of the mother church.

Happiness means victorious living. Religiously, one is happy when he feels adapted to his universe; when he feels at home in a friendly environment. Socially, the cooperative quest of the good life, when one goes cheerfully forward among friends who have faith, spells happiness. The irreligious ages have not been happy. Our moderns, who have destroyed, for themselves and for too many others, religious faith, are wretched. Every great religious leader has possessed this radiant faith. Jesus had it; he said: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." How did he overcome it? Not by having denied it. He did not seek refuge in the shadows of unreality. Poet though he was, he was objective and dwelt in a real world. He did not overcome the world by exploiting it. This is the modern method of certain forms of business. Not as a hard master, not as a brutal superman, not by squeezing the juice out of the world, did he overcome it. Nor did he overcome it by escaping from it. Jesus never fled into the caves of the hermits. He possessed the joy of life. People pleased him. Sunshine, flowers, birds and voices gave him enjoyment. He did overcome the world by meeting it squarely, looking it level in the eye, gaining its secret and winning by his superior religious faith. The result was peace. Angels ministered.

If the victory over the world is our faith, the history of the Christian church ought to prove it. Let us look at three ages which undoubtedly gave a sense of security, a feeling of satisfaction, and a knowledge of creative activity to those who entered into the company of the faithful. Other periods might have been chosen, but these will illustrate, clearly, the idea.

I

The Apostolic Age.—After nineteen centuries we look back upon those early days with a kind of envy. What a glow those Christians had, what sufferings they endured with songs, what victories they gained, how swiftly they swept in their conquering enthusiasm. Fresh from the personal inspiration of Jesus, they had no doubts, only assured faith; it was an age of happiness.

They laid the foundations of the church. Doubters never build. There is nothing creative in doubt. At a banquet I sat beside Mr. Herr, president of the great Westinghouse corporation. We were discussing satisfactions. Finally he said: "The only satisfaction which a man gets out of living is that of achievement." It was the word of a strong man. The builders are happy and faith alone builds. The early disciples had this deep joy. They had no doubts, their convictions were granite. Jesus was no myth to them. His teachings were accepted, believed and followed. They felt that they were doing his will and saving society. Their evangelistic zeal was superb. How we would like to "recover that first, fine, careless rapture." There was certainty and there was joy. The church sent out missionaries, flaming evangels, and everywhere new churches developed. Those early Christians loved one another, they gathered at feasts. They sang; for music was in their souls. Thousands were added to the true faith. Persecutions were tossed aside as of nothing worth. Sufferings were taken in the stride. It was a glorious period and from the fourth decade of the twentieth century we look back upon it with a note of wistfulness. Polycarp, tied to the stake and threatened with having his tongue torn out unless he would recant, cried: "Why should I speak ill of him who has done only good to me?" He died in his radiant faith. Doubt paralyzes, faith builds. There was triumph in that early church and happiness among those new disciples of the Master. They had conviction; they did things. Well may we follow in their footsteps.

II

The Cathedral Age.—One warm, sunny afternoon last summer, I spent in and around the Cathedral of Chartres. Entering, one saw the splashes of color, from the windows, upon the gray stone columns and upon the floor. Like the windows of heaven burned the glass above and beyond the choir. Sitting there one thought of the age which built the cathedrals. Europe flowered with them. In Milan, in Cologne, in Paris, in Amiens, in Canterbury, York and Durham and scores of places the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw the erection of those masses of chiseled masonry, dedicated "to the greater glory of God." One single motive animated every act of mason, woodcarver, worker in glass or sculptor—to honor God. Was there any doubt? Not a bit of it. Prayers, songs, skilled toil—all blended in one mighty anthem to the living God and to Jesus Christ, his Son. Doubt could not have done anything, faith brought creation and happiness. There are many stories of simple peasants who did what they could for the cathedral. Perhaps they drove the cart that carried the stone; perhaps they hewed the tree and brought it from the

forest. The entire community toiled together and then together knelt in the holy aisles. What aspiration, what mystery, what vastness, what conviction they wrought into those piles of stone!

Coming, with the cynical mind of our century, into these lovely creations, one has a feeling of enjoying only what others have wrought. We do not feel altogether in sympathy with the note that built these cathedrals. Even the mighty churches of today, such as Liverpool cathedral, St. John the Divine, Washington cathedral, and the chapels at Princeton and at the University of Chicago, give out a hollow note of mere imitation; they do not seem to spring fullheartedly from the soul of our time. They seem more like beautiful shells. Money will build them, but can faith fill them with life? That is the question. Our need is to recover the faith. Today we enter, we feel the silence, the unearthly beauty, the spirit of awe and reverence comes stealing over us, but can we worship? Has the life departed from our faith?

III

The Age of Wesley.—One reads, with interest, the story of the "Holy club" in Oxford. But these fine young men had not tried their wings. Cloistered philosophy is one thing, but the storm of the world is quite another. The Savannah experience of John Wesley was dismal. Then, in the Moravian mission, his "heart was strangely warmed" and it was that experience which gave vitality to the Wesleyan movement. Another happy age was ushered in, because a strong leader found genuine faith. What splendid enthusiasm characterized those religious meetings in old halls and in open fields! What conversions followed that direct preaching! What prayers went up to God! The plain people heard him gladly. Charles Wesley wrote his immortal hymns at this time. Happiness came into the hearts of hard-working folks. Religion, like a good mother, took her children into her warm arms. Chesterton is right—"The happy ages are the ages of faith."

But ours is not such an age. No wonder Bertrand Russell reminds us that only in India, Russia and China do young people have any joy of life. The rest have lost confidence in patriotism, beauty, truth and even religion. Their youth is burned out—and wretched. What a tragedy—everything to live with, nothing to live for! Modern conveniences, but no modern conviction. God, what an emptiness! We have wrecked our churches and sit, desolately, lamenting the work of our hands.

Can we recover our faith? Do we, in fact, live in a world from which the values of God, immortality and the person of Jesus, have been finally stripped? Have the gates of hell prevailed against the church?

The cure is not to be found in trying to fill an empty shell. I stake my hope upon liberalism, upon a liberalism that is free, intelligent and rightly emotional; upon a liberalism that scorns all wooden scaffoldings, and which trusts actual values. I know that we cannot cross oceans walking on moonbeams, but has material science the last word? Religion has its own distinct field. Nothing can invalidate that realm. The soul has its reasons.

Just now there is too much loose thinking and too much immature writing. Disaster must result. Some years ago an attempt was made to build a cantilever bridge across the St. Lawrence river. One morning, one of the two engineers in charge of construction thought that he detected a slight twist. He called his associate. The other man said: "Well, probably there is a deviation from absolute precision, but nothing will come of it." Riveters rang again, beams swept into place, workmen swarmed upon the growing structure, and then, about noon, the entire bridge suddenly buckled and went down into the waters, carrying many men to death. Since then a new bridge has been built upon correct lines.

John Ray Ewers

Philosophers, scientists, psychologists, psychiatrists and preachers must stop being reckless. What do we know? What are the facts? What have we experienced? What can we share? It is because religion possesses certain values, rests in security in some realms; it is because of what it can do and what good men and women have experienced that we can construct our bridge.

We must sing again. In joy we must build again. Religion is nothing if not a choir of angels. One morning last summer I heard an eager, youthful, preacher in the ancient pulpit of Westminster abbey. He told us of a fallen angel who when asked what he most missed, now that he was cast out of heaven, replied: "I think—the sound of the trumpets in the morning."

A Page of Lenten Verse

The Master

HE called the unknown best from Peter, James,
And all the rest, who met Him face to face,
And lent their lives to His amazing grace
Of humor, irony and insight; flames
Of lambent love from him seared out the shames
Of lifelong littleness in them, till base
Was base no more, and even commonplace
Became uncommon, till their very names
Grew strong to move a world that would have thought
Them simple, stupid, ordinary men,
As once they had been, helpless for that task—
Till Christ upcaught in them the gold he sought,
Drew forth their deepest selves. . . . Can He again
Do that, if you, or I, have faith to ask?

H. D. Gallaudet.

Jesus

AWAY with Him—this Jesus meek and mild
Whereof ye battle yet—this is not He
That kept His steady path when every power
Of mightiest empire and the ancient law
Stood ranged against Him; that with violence
Purged clean the Temple and, contemptuously,
In that dread garden, flung the sword aside;
Though men and God forsook Him, did not swerve,
But, in full knowledge, took the certain way
Through fearful night to ignominious death;
That spurned the opiate for His agony;
That even death defied, and conquered it.
That Jesus shall ye preach, that bravest One,
Noblest, supremest Hero—yea, a Man!

Reginald C. Eva.

Dereliction

"Eloi, eloi, lama sabacthani"

I HAVE seen morning break within His eyes
That caught the heavenly light;
And I have seen in Him the midnight skies
The very night of night.

I have seen God within that morning glow;
But not before His cry,
My God, why hast Thou left me? did I know
That God could be so nigh.

The shrine was brightest with the lamp withdrawn;
His winter was my spring;
His midnight cry the voices of my dawn;
The Crucified, my King!

Edward Shillito.

Golgotha's Cross

WHAT is the cross on Golgotha to me—
But the brave young Jesus murdered there?
Roman justice debased?
Israel's Messiah lost?

The tender lips agonized?
The active mind bewildered?
The feet, that walked fair Galilee,
Pierced by nails?

I have tried to speak
The words those lips revealed.
I have tried to think as He thought.
I have taught my feet to walk
Humbly as He walked.

And God prepared me a cross.

The arms reach out to gather in
The cripples, the blind, the weak.
The arms reach out to feed them,
To give them to drink.
In these hands the nails are driven.

But the cross points upward.
The arms fold me.
The cross lifts me.
Golgotha's cross is the road to heaven.

Raymond Kresensky.

The Universal Guilt

I SAW One greeted with a kiss;
A son of night performed the deed;
And then they led away my Lord
To be despised, to suffer, bleed;
And I stood by, nor said a word,
Nor was I by His mute grief stirred.

I saw One wear a crown of thorns;
They placed it rudely on His brow,
And pressed it down; and as He bowed
They cried, "Messiah—see Him now!"
And I stood by, nor moved a limb
To save my Lord, or comfort Him.

I saw One hanging on a cross;
As in each hand they drove the nail,
He groaned and cried, "O God, forgive!"
They laughed and shouted, "King, all hail!"
And I with them was standing there,
As He breathed out His dying prayer.

Thomas Curtis Clark.

WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE

REV. OSWALD W. S. MCCALL *is pastor* of the First Congregational church, Berkeley, Calif., where he carries on a potent ministry among the students at the State University of California. He is an Australian by birth, and was ordained to the Methodist ministry.

About five years ago Rev. TERTIUS VAN DYKE resigned a New York city pastorate, where he had been signally successful, to become pastor of the Congregational church, Washington, Conn. The son of his famous father, Dr. Henry van Dyke, he has collaborated with him in several books and published others, like "Songs of Seeing and Finding," on his own account. He is a Princeton and Union seminary man.

Professor CHARLES R. ERDMAN *has* written many books on New Testament themes, and the spiritual life. He is also a biographer of D. L. Moody. As professor of practical theology in Princeton seminary, and in 1925 moderator of the Presbyterian general assembly, he had a leader's part in the period of disquiet over fundamentalism versus modernism. Dr. Erdman discharged his responsibilities as a conciliator and a constructive churchman.

Rev. M. J. MCPIKE *is a graduate of* William Jewell college, Liberty, Mo., and a graduate of Colgate-Rochester divinity school. He is at present pastor of First Baptist church, Eagle, Idaho.

Rev. GEORGE STEWART *came up to the pulpit* of First Presbyterian church, Stamford, Conn., by way of Yale where he took his Ph. D. degree, a Y. M. C. A. secretaryship, and an associate pastoral relationship with Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin at Madison Avenue Presbyterian church, New York City. He is well known as author of "The Incarnation in Our Street," "The Crucifixion in Our Street," "The Resurrection in Our Street" and other books.

Rev. CARL C. SEITTER *is a Boston university man.* He is pastor of Grace Methodist church, Los Angeles, which is in a polyglot section of that city and maintains an extensive social ministry through its social center.

A bishop without a diocese! That is the distinction of the Rt. Rev. PAUL JONES, who has charge of the religious life of the famous Antioch college at Yellow Springs, Ohio. Bishop Jones gave up his Episcopal diocese during the war; but it is a mistake to say that he has none now. He is a bishop and shepherd of all those who hate war.

For twenty-two years Rev. JOHN RAY EWERS has been pastor of the East End Christian church, Pittsburgh, Pa. When he proposed the erection of the present beautiful house of worship the congregation extended him a call for ten years, and he accepted. Dr. Ewers' leadership in Pittsburgh extends to the social and cultural interests of the city.

Rev. HAROLD C. PHILLIPS *is minister of* First Baptist church, Cleveland, Ohio.

TITLES *and* TEXTS

What PULPIT Readers are Preaching About

H. ADDIS LEESON, Trinity Methodist, Flint, Mich. "The Creative Commonplace." Luke 17:14—"And as they went, they were cleansed."

HERMAN G. BORNE, Christ Evangelical, Houston, Tex. "As Usual." Luke 2:42—"They went up as usual to the festival."

ROBERT RUSSELL WICKS, Dean of Chapel, Princeton University. "Fearless Individualism." John 21:22—"What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

JOHN D. GREEN, First Methodist, Bucyrus, O. "The Recovery of Wonder." Acts 3:10—"They were filled with wonder and amazement."

FOR YOUR SERMON TITLE AND TEXT
(Mail to The Christian Century Pulpit)

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Title of sermon

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Text used (Write out the text)

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Name of minister

.....

.....
Name of church

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Address

MACINTOSH MACLEOD, United Presbyterian, Garden City, N. Y. "The Revenge of Jesus." Matthew 5:44—"Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you."

DOUGLAS HORTON, Leyden Congregational, Brookline, Mass. "The Cup That Never Faileth." Matthew 26:27—"And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it."

RICHARD RADCLIFFE, Cooper Memorial Methodist, Philadelphia. "The Master of Men." Luke 5:5—"Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net."

JAMES E. FREEMAN, Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Washington, D. C. "America's Choice." Galatians 2:6—"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

W. T. MCELVEEN, United Church (Congregational), Atlanta, Ga. "Christianity Introduces a Better Hope." Hebrews 7:19—"There is introduced a better hope."

VICTOR W. THRALL, First Methodist, Battle Creek, Mich. "The Breadth of the Narrow Way." 2 Corinthians 5:14—"For the love of Christ narrows me." Matthew 7:14—"Narrow is the gate that leadeth unto life."

FREDERICK W. CROPP, JR., First Presbyterian, Wheeling, W. Va. "Ambushed Opportunities." 1 Corinthians 16:9—"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

WELDON E. BRADBURN, Trinity Methodist, St. Paul, Minn. "Is Sin a Reality?" 1 John 1:8—"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

R. F. HINKELMAN, Community Congregational, Little Falls, N. J. "The Conservation of Spiritual Energy." Ecclesiastes 3:14—"I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE Wickersham report writes a new chapter in the story of prohibition. If any minister has taken his cue from the wet press—and, God pity us, there is little else but a wet press—and spoken scornfully or impatiently of this report, let him reconsider it carefully on its merits and he will change his mind. It is a dry report. The commission was able to agree only on dry recommendations. It presented these recommendations unequivocally, backed by nine of the eleven members. These nine all stand opposed to the return of the saloon, to the return of the liquor problem to the individual states, to the government's going into the liquor business, to the modification of the Volstead law so as to permit light wines and beer; they favor an aggressive policy of enforcement with additional appropriations for the purpose, improved organization and improved legislation. The wet press has spread far and wide the falsehood that, in their individual opinions attached to the report, the members deny or take back what they say in the report. This is not so, except in the case of Mr. Newton Baker, whom we do not include as one of the nine. The nine members differ among themselves on matters lying outside of the report, but these differences cancel each other out, and in no instance do the nine individual opinions conflict with the report. We need not be afraid of its candid descriptions of the violation of the law. The drys are the last to defend conditions as they are. Nor need we shrink from the variegated display of personal opinions which the members annex to the report. So far as these opinions are wet, they offset one another. Taking the report in connection with President Hoover's rejection of any suggested revision of the 18th amendment, the drys may confidently use the document as a campaign manual.

The Wickersham Report Is Dry!

The Book of the Month

THE ISSUES OF LIFE. *By Henry Nelson Wieman. Abingdon Press.* $2.00.

I AM a member of the board of editors of the Religious Book Club. A month or two ago, just after the monthly package of books had arrived from which selection was to be made of the club's book for the following month, one of my Christian Century colleagues came into my office. Looking through the titles, his eye fell on "The Issues of Life," by Wieman. He stopped and looked at me. "No need for you," he said, "to read all these books; your mind is made up already." I don't think he was quite fair, but he did know my weakness for Wieman. I am frank to say that I regard him as working the richest vein which any of our modern thinkers on religion have discovered. I have talked with many who have read him. Not every one appraises him as I do. There is something so translucent about his thought that many readers miss its significance. Some even think it is commonplace. But he is all the time exploring the farther reaches of that most fruitful definition of God which he called a *minimum* definition: God is that upon which we depend and to which we must conform to attain the greatest possible values. His present book is occupied with practical guidance in the everyday problems of life, but its philosophical implications are revolutionary. It is interesting to see Dr. Wieman squeeze John Dewey and get the very juice of religion out of him! The two great chapters of the book, for me, at least, are those on "Religion" and "God and the Ideal."

A Thought for the Month

WHETHER we pray or not is at bottom a question of courage. Prayer is an act of bravery. A coward cannot pray. I do not refer to the kind of courage required to face our fellows in the act of prayer—the courage of the boy who ventures to kneel on the first night he is away from home in the dormitory. That takes courage, to be sure. But it is not others whom we are chiefly afraid of: it is ourselves. We lack courage to face the facts of our own inner lives. Our thinking gets muddy when we think of ourselves. We lack the courage to examine under all our disguises and expose to our own eyes what we are really like. It is easier to be honest everywhere else than in dealing with ourselves. We are afraid of the inner facts. We take shy peeps now and then, furtive glances, but we do not look long nor steadily. Our attention is quickly diverted. This timid and fearful way we have of treating ourselves is the reason we do not pray. If we are to pray we must be willing to search ourselves, and we must be willing for God to search us. But God cannot search us except through our own self-consciousness. The very essence of prayer, therefore, is courage. But we have a certain superstitious fear of looking into the mystery of our soul, much as a child has of going into a dark room. We must overcome this cowardice, and deal bravely and firmly with the realities of our inner lives. We will not then be skeptical about prayer, for when we summon our courage honestly to face the facts about ourselves, we are at that moment in the act of prayer.

The Courage Of Prayer

Charles Clayton Morrison

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